

PHYSICAL FEATURES³

The Philippines contains a land area of 114,400 square miles. This exceeds the combined areas of the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, is slightly less than the area of the British Isles and the area of Italy, and is considerably smaller than Japan. In point of area the Philippines ranks fifteenth among the nations of the world.

The salient characteristics of the Philippine Archipelago have been outlined as follows: (i) The rugged and irregular features of the islands; (2) the fertility of the soil; (3) the great extent of coast line which is twice as long as that of continental United States; (4) the mountainous character of the country, with the mountain ranges generally following the coast; (5) the relatively few large rivers; and (6) the number of active and dormant volcanoes. Generally speaking, the prevailing physical features are heavily forested mountain ranges with alternating valleys or plains.

The mountains rise to considerable elevations. Mount Apo in Mindanao is nearly ten thousand feet in height, and Mount Pulog in northern Luzon is only slightly less in height. While the highest peaks in the Philippines fall short of the elevations of mountains in other parts of the world, it should be noted that Philippine mountain ranges rise more or less abruptly from the seashore and therefore present a striking picture of contrasting elevations and of ruggedness. Great ocean depths, called "deeps," are found in many sections within or bordering the archipelago. The

greatest known
ocean depth in the world is situated in the
famous "Philippine
Deep," only forty-five miles to the eastward of
northern
Mindanao.

The two best-known volcanoes are Taal
Volcano, located in

⁸ Section read by Capt. E. H. Pagenhart, Director of Coast
Surveys, and
Father Miguel Selga, S J., Director of the Weather Bureau.